

## *I am here because I care – Catalogue of prints by Helen Wilding, 2014*

### 1. *I am here because I care*, Helen Wilding 2014, collage of prints on canvas

Snapshots from the journey of a mental health carer. Illustrated with an understanding inspired by my own experiences, it reflects the stories that many carers have shared with me over the years. It is a journey from grief to strength with many stops in between.

(Available as a glossy A1 poster)



### 2. *Motherhood*, Helen Wilding 1998, signed giclée print

Why does a carer care? I don't know how to explain it better than this. My second child was six weeks old, and I can still remember how soft her forehead was, and how her fingers gripped on to mine as she snuggled on my lap. I drew her in pencil, and with every stroke I felt I was stroking her. It really was a labour of love.



### 3. *Thank you for caring*, Helen Wilding 2012, signed giclée print

Originally designed as a poster for Carers Week 2012, this celebrates and thanks all the carers out there who freely give their time and love day in, day out. It was my first attempt at creating my own collage papers, and I gave the original to a brilliant carer advocate in NSW. It couldn't have gone to a more fitting home.



### 4. *Loving Families*, Helen Wilding 2013, signed giclée print

Around 1 in 4 of us is likely to experience mental illness at some point in our lifetime. How many loving families is that? Regardless of the evidence, many families and carers feel somehow responsible for causing mental illness, and there is still an enormous amount of stigma felt by parents in particular. I think it is time that we recognise that this could happen to anyone.



### 5. *Acceptance*, Helen Wilding 2011, signed giclée print

"Accepting that I can't do any more. Our hopes and expectations have changed. The line has shifted. What will be will be. It is not our decision. And it is not our fault." Much as carers can feel an overwhelming responsibility, there is also a time to step back and accept that you have done your best. You can't keep beating yourself up over things you have no control over.



### 6. *Sitting*, Helen Wilding 2012, signed giclée print

Learning to sit with things you can't change is harder than you would imagine - especially if you tend to be a "fixer"! I was playing with zentangling and negative shapes when I drew this - doodling is a wonderful stress relief - and yes, it helps me sit ....!



### 7. *Music for the soul*, Helen Wilding 2011, signed giclée print

This was based on a friend's precious guitar which obligingly posed for us. I had a great time layering my collection of colour pencils and using autumn colours for a change. It isn't my usual colour choice, but I thought it reflected the soothing quality of music. How I envy those with musical ability!



### 8. *Looking for my Mojo*, Helen Wilding 2011, signed giclée print

Mojo or Nojo? When you are worn out it can be tricky finding your Mojo again - and working out what that might be. I drew this when a friend dragged me along to a burlesque life drawing class - note I was doing the drawing, not the dancing! It was great to step out of my comfort zone - both with the life drawing and the location. It was definitely the beginning of finding my Mojo.



### 9. *Flow like the water*, Helen Wilding 2012, signed giclée print

"Bend like the wind, flow like the water". The father of a close friend used to say this all the time, and she shared it with me during a difficult time. I don't know that I am incredibly successful at it, but I know that when I can go with the flow I almost inevitably feel better and more relaxed. Slowly (very slowly) I am learning to push my own pause button!



### 10. *Pay it forward*, Helen Wilding 2012, signed giclée print

This was inspired by the "Kindness Mission" of Kelly Rae Roberts, who challenged artists to create a poster like this to share so people could tear off what they want, such as courage, strength etc. This version is a high quality signed print, but I also have a free poster download at <http://helenwildingart.com> so please feel free to pay it forward! (\*conditions apply to use of the free download)



### 11. *The Lighthouse*, Helen Wilding 2012, signed giclée print

Many carers don't live with their loved one, but that doesn't mean they care any less. Even in hard times you can still make your home a lighthouse of sorts - leaving a light shining in the window so that there is always a safe place to come home to. It's about letting a loved one know you will always be there for them. A message saying "thinking of you - hope you are ok" doesn't hurt, either.



### 12. *Baby steps*, Helen Wilding 2012, signed giclée print

These are my son's baby shoes. I felt quite emotional as I found them in the bottom of our box of "special things", and it reminded me of my pride as I watched my toddler lurch across the room, from knee to wall to table top, grinning excitedly. How wobbly are those first steps? But what do they lead to?



### 13. *Self belief*, Helen Wilding 2012, signed giclée print

I was firmly in my doodling stage when I painted this as a gift for a young girl who was visiting us. I wanted to remind her that she was worth her own love and respect - but it was also a reminder to stop putting myself down and look after myself too. Sometimes we are our own worst enemies!



### 14. *Peace*, Helen Wilding 2012, signed giclée print

Blues and greens immediately give me a feeling of peacefulness. Spirituality is important - and that doesn't mean you have to be religious. For me it's about making peace with myself, working out what I believe in and what really matters, being mindful, and taking time to be grateful for the little things.



### 15. *Pyjama Day Rules*, Helen Wilding 2012 signed giclée print

My daughter strongly believes in the importance of pyjama days, and every so often we block a day off on the calendar and just lounge around all day watching tv, nibbling on yummy goodies, cuddling the dog and painting our nails with rainbow colours (or she paints them, as I am hopeless at it). I struggle to just "sit", so spending this sort of precious time together is wonderful.



### 16. *Glittery Tap*, Helen Wilding 2012, signed giclée print

Tap dancing was on my bucket list and glitter is one of my all time favourite things - so you can't imagine how excited I was when Glittery Tap came to town! Odd really - I can't bear the thought of performing on stage, I have at least 4 left feet and I avoid exercise like the plague - but it was just a great laugh and exercised a completely different part of my brain so I had no time to worry :)



### 17. *HOLDERS of hope*, Helen Wilding 2013, signed giclée print

I went to a mental health conference where I heard the phrase "holders of hope" for the first time, and it just sang to me. I headed home inspired and created this poster for Carers Week 2013. My daughter supplied the tiny origami birds, and I finally got to use the glitter glue. I wanted my picture to be a bit more multicultural, so I hope I got the symbol for "hope" right on the bowl!



### 18. *Quiet beauty*, Helen Wilding 2013, signed giclée print

My mother used to say "Yes, we are a sensitive bunch - but what would the world be like without sensitive people?". I don't often use pastels, but I liked their softness in this portrait and I had a lot of fun smudging them with my fingers. I hope the gentleness of my sitter comes across and that it can be seen as a celebration of the introverts in our extrovert world.



### 19. *Flourish*, Helen Wilding 2013, signed giclée print

I didn't know where this painting was going when I started splashing red and green paint around. But when I picked up the light blues and started to run them over the top I somehow discovered the plants and hearts hiding underneath. It was one of those days where I truly did go with the flow, not thinking or planning, and the painting really did flourish, perfectly reflecting the way I felt at the time.



### 20. *Tree of life*, Helen Wilding 2013, signed giclée print

Every so often I spend a precious arty day with friends who have also been carers - I can't tell you how much we laugh! While chatting away I started splashing my canvas with greens and yellows. Then it turned red and gold and looked like it was on fire. Then out of the chaos, tamed by the blues, grew this tree. Growth is a bit like that - you just never know what you are going to get.



